



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 30 2016

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Bruce Rauner
Governor of Illinois
State Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Rauner:

I am writing to summarize the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's recent decisions relating to sulfur dioxide (SO₂) air quality in your state. As required by section 107(d) of the Clean Air Act, the EPA is moving forward to determine which areas are meeting the 2010 1-hour health-based national ambient air quality standard for SO₂, which areas must take steps to reduce SO₂ pollution, and which areas we are presently unable to make a determination for based on available information. Exposure to SO₂ can cause a range of adverse health effects, including narrowing of the airways which can cause difficulty breathing and increased asthma symptoms.

On June 3, 2010, the EPA strengthened the health-based or "primary" standard for SO₂ by establishing a 1-hour standard at a level of 75 parts per billion. On July 25, 2013, the EPA designated 29 areas in 16 states as nonattainment, but did not at that time designate other areas. Pursuant to a March 2, 2015, court-ordered schedule¹, the agency must complete the remaining SO₂ designations by three specific deadlines: July 2, 2016, December 31, 2017, and December 31, 2020.

To meet the first of these deadlines, the EPA is designating areas "nonattainment", "unclassifiable/attainment", or "unclassifiable" after evaluating:

1. newly monitored violations of the 2010 SO₂ standard based on the most recent 3 calendar years of certified air monitoring data, and
1. areas that contain any stationary source that had not been announced, as of March 2, 2015, for retirement and that according to the EPA's Air Markets Database emitted in 2012 either (i) more than 16,000 tons of SO₂ or (ii) more than 2,600 tons of SO₂ with an annual average emission rate of at least 0.45 pounds of SO₂/mmBTU.

After reviewing all available data and information for this round of designations, I am pleased to inform you that the EPA is designating parts of your state that meet the 2010 primary SO₂ standard as "unclassifiable/attainment." States should work to maintain SO₂ air quality that meets the EPA's health-base standard in unclassifiable/attainment areas.

¹ *Sierra Club v. McCarthy*, No. 3-13-cv-3953 (SI) (N.D. Cal. Mar. 2, 2015).

In addition, portions of your state violate the 2010 primary SO₂ standard. As directed by the Clean Air Act, the EPA is designating these areas “nonattainment.” For nonattainment areas, section 192 of the CAA directs states to develop a State Implementation Plan that shows how an area will attain the SO₂ standard as quickly as possible, but no later than 5 years from the effective date of this designation. This plan needs to be submitted to the EPA within 18 months from the effective date of designation of the nonattainment area.

The enclosed table lists the areas within Illinois that the EPA is designating during this round of designations. A detailed explanation of the EPA’s rationale for these designations is available in the Technical Support Document (TSD) for each area in your state. The TSDs are available on the web at: <https://www.epa.gov/sulfur-dioxide-designations/epa-completes-second-round-sulfur-dioxide-designations/>. In addition, the docket contains a Response to Comments document that responds to general and in many cases area-specific comments raised in response to the EPA’s notice of availability published in March 2016 and the letters informing you and other Governors of the EPA’s intended designations sent in February 2016. These final designations will take effect 60 days after the notice I signed today is published in the *Federal Register*.

As provided in the EPA’s SO₂ Data Requirements Rule, the EPA will designate all remaining areas by either December 31, 2017, or December 31, 2020. We expect that additional information collected as a result of the SO₂ Data Requirements Rule will inform these future actions. Our approach focuses resources on identifying and addressing unhealthy levels of SO₂ in areas where people are most likely to be exposed to violations of the standard.

Thank you for your work to improve air quality and protect public health. We look forward to continued work with you and your staff to implement the 2010 health-based SO₂ standard. For additional information regarding these designations, please visit our website at <https://www.epa.gov/sulfur-dioxide-designations/>.

If you have further questions or concerns, please contact me or your staff may call Mark Rupp, Deputy Associate Administrator for Intergovernmental Relations, at rupp.mark@epa.gov or at (202) 564-7178.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gina McCarthy", with a stylized, flowing script.

Gina McCarthy

Enclosure

Enclosure – Final Area Designations: July 2, 2016

Illinois

Area Name	Source	County Name	Designation
Alton Township, IL	Alton Steel	Madison (p)	Nonattainment
Wood River Township, IL	Wood River Power Station	Madison (p)	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Massac County, IL	Joppa Steam Coal Power Plant	Massac	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Jasper County, IL	Newton Power Station	Jasper	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Putnam/Bureau Counties, IL	Hennepin Power Station	Bureau Putnam	Unclassifiable/Attainment
Williamson County, IL	Marion Power Station	Williamson	Nonattainment

(p) – partial county

Consistent with the final consent decree schedule, designations for the rest of the state will be addressed by either December 31, 2017, or December 31, 2020.